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ABSTRACT

A "travelling" congress was conducted in five European cities (Berlin, Warsaw, Prague, Budapest, and Vienna) to promote a mutual exchange of views between east and west. The participants stressed the growing European Community interest in current examples of cooperation with neighbors in central and eastern Europe. In addition to promoting dialogue and the exchange of views and ideas, the "Eurotrain" was developed as a venue to promote western endeavors to support eastern Europe. The congress participants traveled by train for study visits and workshops in the five cities. Each national conference had an opening event in which experts at national and community levels provided participants with an insight into the educational and employment situations in the various countries. Experts from western Europe and the United States provided examples of local structural developments, the development of further training programs, and the planning of integrated training concepts. Workshop participants in the five cities each worked on six topics: international cooperation in training and continuing training; continuing training and migration; training and continuing training in enterprises; vocational training and continuing training in the context of regional, structural, and development policies; continuing training of women; and continuing training at school in the context of adult training. Examples of programs on these themes were provided for each of the five countries. The "Eurotrain" concept of learning exchange was explored and endorsed. (KC)

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4th European Congress on Continuing Education and Training
"Eurotrain for Training"
Berlin - Warsaw - Prague - Budapest - Vienna
5 - 9 October 1992

Preliminary remark

This Flash is not a comprehensive report on the five conference days, but a selection of information on general coordination. National contributions will be gathered to form integrated documentation which may be requested at a later date from BBJ Servis, Alt Moabit 73A, D-1000 Berlin 21. A film presentation made by a team in all five cities will also be available.

Eurotrain for Training

Following the first three European Congresses on Continuing Education and Training which were organized by CEDEFOP (The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training), the Berlin Senate Department for Employment and Social Affairs and the BIBB (The Federal Institute for Vocational Training) in Berlin, the 4th European Congress on Continuing Education and Training took place on 5 - 9 October 1992 in the form of a "travelling" congress, "Eurotrain for Training" in the capitals Berlin, Warsaw, Prague, Budapest and Vienna with some 400 participants. The Congress, which was supported by the European Community was planned by a committee representing the national conference organizers in Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Austria. Overall organization of the congress was entrusted to BBJ Servis GmbH for Youth Welfare.

The political representatives in the five capitals signed a joint declaration at the close of the five conference days of "Eurotrain for Training". This states,

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- that in Europe support should be given by means of improved further and continuing training to all confronted with economic and technological challenges and, in particular, to those in danger of becoming unemployed.;
- that magic solutions do not exist but that acquiring knowledge of the various activities and endeavours in East and West is valuable;
- that the "Eurotrain" and the workshops and study visits presented an ideal opportunity to get to know new approaches and projects on the labour market, in further and continuing training and in retraining.;
- that the "Eurotrain for training" was an example of how declarations of intent at a global and European level could be backed up by dialogue between those responsible and practicians. In their declaration they stated, "European institutions and national bodies, employers and trade unions should incorporate the ideas produced by the "Eurotrain for training" in their future work.

The 400 participants from 25 countries on the "Eurotrain" contributed to the success of the event. 200 participants came from the Federal Republic of Germany, 10 from Austria, 15 from Italy, 20 from France, 20 from the United Kingdom, and a number from Belgium, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Ireland, Spain, Portugal, Israel, Canada and the USA. A total of 48 from East European countries, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Russia, Letland, Lithuania, Estonia, Hungary, Slovenia and Belorussia. The participants comprised those directly involved in vocational training, funders of vocational training and vocational training experts in addition to representatives from the competent ministries, local regional authorities, the social partners and a small group from the media.

In addition to the participants, the opening conference in Berlin of "Eurotrain for Training" was attended by 600 visitors. In Warsaw 400 visitors, in Prague 500, in Budapest 200 and in Vienna 400 participants took part in the national conferences, testifying to the aim of the congress to bring together vocational training experts from east and west to exchange views, plans and ideas for projects. The conference participants on board the train, who were guests at the national conferences during the day, and who travelled overnight on the train to the next conference venue had plenty of opportunity for making contacts. This has opened important channels of communication, extending an informal network of communication between those involved in vocational training in Europe.

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The aim of the Congress: to promote a mutual exchange of views between east and west

At the opening conference in Berlin, Frau Christine Bergmann, Mayor of Berlin and Senator for Work and Women's Affairs, expressed the view that in the deliberations between vocational training institutions, the issue was one of a multilateral transfer of experience and not that of transposing western models on the east. Similar views were expressed by Frau Regine Hildebrandt, the competent Minister for the Land Brandenburg, Hermann Schmidt, Secretary General of the BIBB, and Reinhard Wohlleben, President of the Berlin Employment office during the opening conference chaired by Ernst Piehl, the Director of CEDEFOP. Bartolomej Piotrowski from the Polish Ministry of Labour spoke of transnational projects which had been initiated between Poland and Germany.

At the opening of the European Congress the Vice-President of the European Parliament, Hans Peters, stressed the growing Community interest in current examples of cooperation with neighbours in central and eastern Europe. He said that in addition to promoting dialogue and the exchange of views and ideas the "Eurotrain" was a venue which promoted western endeavours to support eastern Europe.

The national conferences

Each national conference had an opening event in which experts at national and Community level provided participants with an insight into the educational and employment situation in the various countries. Experts from western Europe and the USA provided examples of local structural developments, the development of further training programmes and the planning of integrated training concepts.

This helped to prepare workshops which took place on the afternoons and which were backed up by study visits to training centres or enterprises.

The working groups were set up in such a way as to provide the opportunity to discuss the international cooperation opportunities of the individual countries in training and continuing training and to inform participants of the situation at first hand in the specific national contexts and by demonstrating projects and the problems with which they were confronted. The workshops in the five capitals were organized in such a way that participants could pursue a certain topic throughout the congress and could identify the specific national differences. The working groups tackled the following topics:

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- international cooperation in training and continuing training,
- continuing training and migration,
- training and continuing training in enterprises,
- vocational training and continuing training in the context of regional, structural and development policies,
- continuing training and women,
- continuing training at school in the context of adult training.

An exhibition was staged at each national conference where the national organizers of projects and continuing training and CEDEFOP and BBJ could introduce themselves.

Berlin

The example of East Germany

In addition to a presentation of the continuing training system in Germany, discussion was also devoted to establishing training and continuing training facilities in the five new Federal Länder. Speaking for east Germany, Olaf Sund, State Secretary in the Ministry for Employment, Social, Health and Women's Affairs in the Land Brandenburg, spoke of the experience gathered there. Many unemployed are involved in training and further training measures in the belief that it is better to gain qualifications than to remain at home unemployed. The point has now come when individuals have completed the qualifications and are seeking employment. In Mr Sund's view, long periods of unemployment lead to the qualification process being viewed as a punishment. Society, he stated, does not accept individuals who are unemployed and for this reason they are forced to take part in training activities. He demanded that the relationship between qualifications and the creation employment opportunities become a central issue. One proposal from the workshop went as far as to state that only training programmes should be initiated which create employment opportunities. This should be the case as long as the economy is not in a position to offer jobs.

Finding microsolutions

Training and continuing training should not ignore the transnational aspect. The importance of language tuition and the exchange of information as far as East Germany is concerne is underestimated. In Olaf Sund's view it is participation in bilateral projects which provides the opportunity to learn by example. One must commence with microsolutions. Frau Christi Bergmann, Lord Mayor of Berlin, in her capacity as Senator for Employment and Women in Berlin, stressed at the end of the discussion that labour market policies must encompass all

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sectors of society, (officials and ministers in all competent ministries and departments). They must all play their part, on the basis of consensus, in financing continuing training for the labour market.

Warsaw

Vocational training in its early stages

A new legal basis for the educational system in Poland was established in 1991. Education experts in Poland view the law as not sufficiently far-reaching. Social initiatives in state and private education are being retarded and so-called people's education groups are not being included sufficiently in education policy.

In addition, critics claim that the law was formulated by officials "in whom the ghost of the great black hole in the educational budget has instilled fear". The transfer of the necessary authority to the Minister for National Education and Training, the Minister for Labour and Social èolicy and other political decision-makers has been extremely slow.

This uncertain situation in Polish educational policy is reflected in the decrease in the number of employed persons taking part in continuing training activities. Many training centres are forced to close. The reasons for this are manifold "changed entry requirements, a waning interest in learning, decreasing motivation, the need for changes in old organizational forms, training methods and materials, unfortunate administrative decisions which have damaged the reputation of schools for the unemployed and their organizational form, the reduction of hours of tuition per week the absence of guidance and support once provided by the institute for teacher training and its district offices, publication difficulties which have a detrimental effect on preparing topic-related textbooks and methodological books for those taking part in evening classes, in distance training and publications, in general, on educational opportunities for adults. These were the views expressed by Ewa Czarnocka from the University of Warsaw in her paper entitled "Continuing training in Poland, present and future".

The dilemma of continuing training

In her concluding remarks she came to the conclusion that continuing training is experiencing a crisis and that some 3.3 million of a total of 5 million between the ages of 25 and 39 have only received minimum or even less vocational training and urgently require further training. In the opening discussion in Warsaw a similar picture was painted by Stanislav Wyganowski,

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President of the City of Warsaw, Tadeusz Kosek, director of Task Force of Training and Human Resources Cooperation Fund and Michael Boni, State Secretary in the Ministry for Employment and Social Affairs.

Foreign participants gave examples of enterprise labour-market policies. Yves Noel Derenne, Director for Human Resources in Eurotunnel, reported on specifically developed staff and qualification policies in the construction of the tunnel between France and England. Hans-Dieter Koch from the German Education Ministry spoke of experience gathered in the new Federal Länder.

Finding ways to cooperate

Western examples of vocational qualification could provide models. But, as the State Secretary, Peter Haupt, from the Berlin Government stressed, it was a matter of finding forms of cooperation between east and west and not recommending the transposition of western continuing training systems on the east. This was in line with the request to dispense with western arrogance in eastern Europe and to take their experience and mentalities seriously. Study visits were made to:

- The Association of Vocational Further Training institutions (ZDZ),
- the vocational further training centre for the construction industry (Solidarnosc),
- the further training and retraining centre at the "Ursus" machine and tractor firm for employees threatened by unemployment,
- the vocational training centre of the "Zegrze" youth foundation,
- the association of Polish adult education schools.

A Polish example: Ursus

Changes which the Ursus tractor firm had to come to terms with after the political upheavals also include a reduced demand fo their products. In the past they sold some 40 000 tractors annually on the home market. In spite of increased exports on one half of this number is being sold presently. This has resulted in job losses. Ursus trained its employees in the in-company training centre. This has been forced to offer its services externally in order to survive.

It is not possible to estimate the future training needs of the company. On account of a relatively modern language laborator Ursus is in a position to offer language courses which are in high demand and well-frequented. This has given the company t opportunity to assert itself on the international market.

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Prague

Training is not market-oriented

In Czechoslovakia the training system is not tuned to the needs of the market economy. Training institutions are training for a number of occupations for which there is no longer a demand. Restructuring the training system is not taking place through a single reform, but on a step-by-step basis in line with economic, political and social trends. The actual qualification requirements can only be identified when the economic restructuring has been terminated. This was the point of view put forward by the Government representative, representatives from the Ministry for Education and the Ministry of the Federation for Labour and Social Affairs and by the Institute for Commerce, Industry and Trade at the national conference in Prague. The Congress was one of a series of events being held in Czechoslovakia in 1992 to mark the 400th anniversary of the birth of Comenius, the prominent Czech educationalist and humanist.

Employment measures

A speaker pointed out that the unemployment rate in Czechoslovakia at present is 2.7%. It can be maintained at this level presently on account of many employment measures (since doption of the employment laws) implemented by the Ministry. Full use is being made of the funds provided by the government for retraining and qualification for small and medium-sized enterprises.

There is a need to organize more flexibly in future vocational training schools. As there is a need for new occupations the contents of which have still to be formulated, training must be organized in such a way to provide a large variety of occupational qualifications.

In this period of transition there is a need for cooperation with western countries. It was stated in Prague that there was likewise a need for sensitivity in the transfer process from west to east. Such a transfer could only be organized in a meaningful way when existing resources in east European countries are accepted and when consideration is given to how these can be developed. This should take place via new guidance centres working on the principle of subsidiarity and not through a transposition of western know-how. Taking Bremen as an example, western participants stressed the need to plan training and further training in such a way as to integrate with labour market and structural policies.

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The variety of demands placed upon adult training

At one of the afternoon workshops, participants were informed that adult training in Czechoslovakia is confronted at present with the following problems: The need to give consideration to the interests and needs of the individual in developing new concepts, particularly with regard to the acquisition of democratic principles, and the need to comply with the demands of the labour market. Priorities can only be set through setting up a pluralistic training system with a variety of programmes. "The integration processes in west European countries which are endeavouring to encompass central and east European countries require first and foremost close cooperation in education and adult training. Important steps have already been undertaken in this direction. With regard to adult training, various training programmes can be implemented which involve individual social and occupational groups or various significant groups - ecology, the health service etc." as was pointed out by Zdenak Palan, from the Ministry for Education, Youth and Physical Education.

Retraining to bridge the restructuring phase

In Czechoslovakia, retraining is an important factor in the transition to a market economy. Unemployed and employees still in a job are retrained by the labour offices. The latter also offer support to the employer in retraining employees. The labour offices have the task of advising on retraining. In counselling, this staff often is confronted with the following difficulties

"- stereotype thinking, fear of changing profession and of a change in lifestyle,
- fuzzy production programmes and a lack of knowledge about future occupational structures,
- long and cumbersome restructuring of the school system, particularly in the technical school system,
- insufficient preparation of technical and university graduates for work under labour market conditions".

The topic youth and leisure time was the theme of a workshop in Prague. Jiri Suchy from the Institute for Youth Vocational Training, the foundation for the training of young people, stressed the importance of learning to use leisure time usefully. This was borne witness to by increasing problems such as insufficient influence of the family, drug problems, crime, youth unemployment and prostitution. Mr Suchy went on to say: "The State must involve itself in leisure time activities and must exert an influence without detracting from the opportunities it affords. In order to do so the public administrations must function well to guarantee self-expression and to support and protect children and young people".

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Budapest

Fewer jobs - more trainees

Prior to the changes in the political system, vocational training was provided by the schools which trained "en masse fo the broad spectrum of socialist industry". The enterprise/external training centres providing training for those seeking a higher level of qualification are in danger of closing or must adapt to a different clientele. In the past most Hungarians went directly from the vocational intermediate school to a job. Jobs today are hard to find with the result that the training centres have trouble coping with a large number of applicants.

Programme of action for vocational training

The Ministry for Labour has in recent years provided funding to set up training centres. Gabor Demszky, the Lord Mayor of Budapest, Gyula Kiss and Andras Benedek, Minister and State Secretary from the Hungarian Ministry for Labour on the morning of the fourth day of the congress reported on the situation in Hungary. Here there is a need to come to terms with, on the one hand, the need for providing rapid qualifications to develop labour and, on the other hand, not to be too precipitous in restructuring vocational training. An action programme for vocational training has been adopted which was developed jointl by the government, the national institute for vocational training, directors, the heads of schools, instructors and trainers. The draft was sent to each vocational school where i was discussed by staff. It focussed on reforming the content of vocational training, the institutional system, the funding and management systems and the demands placed upon vocational trainers, teachers, guidance counsellors and directors. The results of this discussion at national level should shape the legislative basis for the vocational training system.

Marcel von Donat, Head of Cabinet in the European Commission an Alfonse Verlinden, Deputy Chairman of the CEDEFOP Management Board, summarized a variety of trends in the on-going process o European integration at the end of the morning plenary session.

The afternoon workshops were held in a number of training centres throughout Budapest. The workshop "Further training an women" is but one example.

This workshop was held in a training centre for occupations in the textile sector. The director of the school and a representative of the Ministry of Labour talked about the position of women in the labour market. For the latter, the situation is much more stable than for men. Women are employed

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chiefly in the service sector and in smaller enterprises where work is relatively secure. Men, on the other hand, were employed in larger industrial sectors such as the metal industry which has all but collapsed in Hungary. It can also be observed that women are more ready to participate in continuing training courses and in retraining programmes. As far as the textile sector is concerned and employment for women, this has not been so hit by recession as in other European countries. Labour in Hungary is still relatively inexpensive.

Gyula Kiss stated that women in Hungary still had to learn to recognize the various demands made by their work and to express their needs. Geoff Chivers from the Continuing Training Centre at the University of Sheffield in his paper examined the particular situation of women in eastern Europe. The sectors of the economy in which women were predominantly employed, as for example the agricultural sector and large industries have collapsed.

Labour market policy for women in Hungary is guided by the position of women in the family. The situation of women in western countries should serve as a warning. There the labour market and the social environment was not prepared for the situation as the majority of working women were not mothers in the traditional family situation.

Vienna

International components of vocational training

Adult training and continuing training in Austria in the 90s will concentrate on the international components of training policy. By this experts mean increased participation in certain programmes organized by the European Community and in the work of CEDEFOP as was pointed out by Fritz Rosenberger from the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education and Art.

Professor Hermann from the European Social Fund reported on endeavours within the European Commission to link training and further training with the labour market and structural policies. Frau Bergmann, Mayor of Berlin, had also travelled to Vienna and reiterated remarks she had made in Berlin on the need to develop cooperation between the participating cities.

Lectures by representatives of the Labour and Social Ministry, the Association for Employees and the Chamber of Commerce and a number of study visits gave insight into the current situation of continuing training in Austria. Study visits were made to the Institute for Economic Promotion in the Vienna Chamber of Commerce, the vocational training centre of the Vocational Training Institute, to the Training and Apprenticeship Centre

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for Pneumatics, to the European Academy, to training and employment centres for women, to the continuing training departments of Grundig and General Motors. Information was also provided on joint enterprise apprenticeship schemes and seminars for managers.

Think globally, think Europe - act regionally and locally

One of the nine workshops at the concluding conference in Vienna was entitled "training and continuing training as a policy for regional development". Frau Holzinger from the Austrian Institute for Land Use Planning stated that the success of regional activities depended to a large extent on networking, increasing the professionalism and integrating further training systems, increasing the number participating in continuing training and in coordinating this with other regional measures. The issue of the needs for qualifications proved a problem. How is it possible for a period of years to predict the need for skills and for labour for a certain region and to plan this? If this is not possible, is it then possible to programme the provision of continuing training for future key-qualification needs. Such issues raised many questions but gave no satisfactory answers. Those participating in the seminar were of the opinion that such problems on the long term must be tackled jointly on a transnational basis.

Eurotrain - a new form of learning

Fritz Verzetnisch, present of the Austrian Trade Union Federation (ÖGB) proposed at the concluding event that the text of the song "Cabaret" should be changed to "Education makes the world go round". Educational policy formed the basis for an efficient economy, he said during his talk in the main hall of the Vienna town hall to the participants at the 4th European Congress on Continuing Education and Training. A summing up showed that the study visits had given the participants great insight into the situation in continuing training in the vario Euroepan countries and this had remained the key theme throughout the congress.

Peter Grootings (CEDEFOP) and Manfred Schneider (BBJ) commente on Eurotrain at the outset in Berlin "The 4th European Congres on Continuing Education and Training is an exciting and intensive contribution, in which many have participated, to developing international cooperation in continuing vocational training". This was confirmed by many participants at the end of the Congress in Vienna.

Following the speeches made by the representatives of the soci partners in Austria and in the city of Vienna, all of whom spo highly of the contribution made by "Eurotrain for Training",

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Ernst Piehl, Director of CEDEFOP said in conclusion: "At times dreams become reality. What was initially a pipedream in 1989 has turned into real cooperation surmounting all existing borders and divisions between east and west. Experiencing the communication between nations during these five days and nights provides encouragement for further projects - particularly between cities and regions in the new Europe": In both Budapest and Vienna ideas on organizing a "Euroship for Training" on the Danube are already taking shape.

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